AWARD SUBMISSION: Executive Summary

Category: Excellence in Investigative Research / Consumer Protection Advocacy
Project Title: Project Starlight: Uncovering the Astro-Tech Bait-and-Switch
Submitting Organization: The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group **Lead Investigator:** [Your Name]

1. Project Objective

To investigate, document, and expose the deceptive marketing practices, predatory pricing, and lack of consumer accountability within India's unregulated ₹60,000 crore digital astrology industry, with a specific focus on high-profile platforms utilizing "bait-and-switch" tactics.

2. Methodology

Our team of 20 researchers conducted a rigorous, multi-month data scraping and verification campaign. We analyzed thousands of consumer reviews across independent platforms (MouthShut, Trustpilot, Quora, Reddit). We isolated verified complaints, cross-referenced pricing models, and documented the customer service response loops of major platforms.

3. Key Findings: The Lunar Astro Case Study

The investigation utilized the platform **Lunar Astro**, founded by **Deepanshu Giri**, as its primary case study to illustrate industry-wide malpractice. Our research uncovered a systemic pattern of consumer exploitation:

- **Deceptive Branding:** The platform leverages the founder's reputation to charge premium tariffs (₹8,000 for 15 minutes).
- **Service Substitution:** Consumers are routinely denied access to the advertised experts and are instead serviced by anonymous, junior trainees.

- **Financial Harm & Lack of Redressal:** Consumers reported receiving highly inaccurate, amateur advice during critical life moments (e.g., job losses). Subsequent attempts to contact grievance officers were systematically ignored, resulting in total financial loss for the consumer.

4. Deliverables & Execution

The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group successfully translated this raw data into a multi-channel awareness campaign, producing:

1. A comprehensive Academic White Paper.
2. 40 individualized, verifiable case study files for independent journalistic review.
3. Targeted Press Releases and Op-Eds for national media.
4. Educational brochures and social media awareness posters designed to protect vulnerable demographics.

5. Impact & Significance

"Project Starlight" represents a landmark effort in digital consumer protection. By meticulously documenting the transition of astrology from a traditional faith-based practice into a predatory corporate funnel, this research provides the necessary empirical data for the Ministry of Consumer Affairs to initiate regulatory oversight. It empowers consumers to recognize red flags, demand transparency, and protect their financial well-being against digital exploitation.

Conclusion: This research exemplifies the highest standards of consumer advocacy—giving a voice to the silenced, holding powerful digital entities accountable, and driving systemic change through meticulous investigation.